

DISPENSARY AFFAIRS.

CHAIRMAN HASSELDEN'S REPORT  
MAKES EVERYTHING PUBLIC.

After Thorough Study He Reads a Lecture to County Dispensaries—Gets Right Behind Dispensers and Says There is Too Much Breakeage.

The board of control met in Columbia on last Wednesday. The most important matter was the report of Chairman Hasseleden. This paper demonstrates close attention to the conduct of the dispensary and bodies well for its future conduct. The report is as follows:

Columbia, S. C., June 7, 1898.  
To the Honorable the State Board of Control.

Gentlemen: As your chairman, it has been my duty and pleasure to attend a large part of the past month here in looking into and studying the large business of which we have the control. Various matters of interest have come under my observation, to which I wish to call your attention, and in doing so my report will to a certain extent be disconnected.

I will first give you a statement of our financial standing:

Cash on hand.....\$44,119.01  
Total indebtedness.....\$3,017.05

Cash balance on hand.....\$10,501.96  
We can safely rely upon the cash receipts amounting to \$30,000 per week.

By referring to the report of the Commissioner you will see that we have a large stock of liquor on hand.

With this statement of our finances I would recommend that the Commissioner be instructed to pay \$10,000 to the school fund.

Mr. Milady, the contractor, has given bond for the second contract awarded him. He is making fine progress with his work, and has been paid \$2,183.30.

I have made contract with him to enlarge dock at the front entrance of the new dispensary building which I hope will meet with your approval.

I would suggest that there be at some convenient point—near Commissioner Vance's office—a fireproof vault to hold the present steel safe, books and papers about 10x10 and about 5 feet high inside, with hollow space for air between a steel fire proof door. The cost of such vault properly built would not exceed \$700.

The contract with Mr. Senn for the rent of a part of the vacant lot has been agreed upon, and signed by him and myself. This contract I herewith submit for your inspection.

I would suggest that you employ an expert to examine carefully the whisky on hand until work is possibly done. It will be better to purchase new tanks; if so, then I would recommend that you buy three tanks of 50 barrels capacity each and one tank of 25 barrels capacity. Two of the large tanks are now in the hands of the State.

In moving from our present quarters to the new dispensary building, we will certainly find it necessary to carry two. In view of this fact I think it advisable to make purchases of enough liquor to cover this period in excess of the ordinary purchases, and instruct all the dispensers to increase their orders, so as to have a stock sufficient to carry them until work is resumed.

A DISPENSER'S STORY.

Dispenser J. W. Henry, Laurens, who was summoned here at the last meeting of the board, was checked up soon after our meeting. He is suspended him at once, and visited Laurens the following week and collected from him the above amount and turned the same over to the clerk of the State board of control.

I have just received information from Inspector Edwards as to a shortage of \$308.91 against Dispenser J. K. McMillan at Toddville, S. C.

Mr. Edwards writes me that this dispenser acknowledges that he has been short for three years; yet his reports at this office have been correct, and he has never had any trouble against him, and the same being approved by the county board of control.

Owing to your meeting here tonight I did not take action against him, leaving the matter in your hands.

Since the last meeting of the board I have made enquiry into the looting of the dispensaries at Timmonsville and Florence during the Darlington riot, and find that two cases were placed in the hands of the circuit solicitor for suit covering the amounts of \$285.75 and \$315.51 and get the county boards to keep their dispensers straight, and thus save the county and cities their profits.

I suggest that we require our bookkeepers to charge each dispenser, in addition to their invoice price to dispensers, the dispensers' price to consumers, so when we send our inspectors to check up a dispenser we arm him with the consumers' price and he check the dispenser and holds him liable for every cent received and disbursed to county, city and State.

One of the great hindrances to the successful management of the dispensary system is the incompetency of some of the county dispensers who are elected by the County Boards of Control, and the true cause of this is confirmed until this board approves the action of county board, yet we fail to inquire into his qualification or competency. I suggest that before a dispenser is allowed to take charge of a dispensary he be required to report to this office to be examined as to his qualification and competency. If this is done, good men, though incompetent, may never be placed in a position they cannot fill with credit to themselves and families and an honor to their counties. As it is now, they are placed in positions which they cannot sustain themselves, and families.

In reporting these matters for consideration, I do not mean to be understood as having reference to all county boards and county dispensers, but to those who are incompetent, and in this way I have taken four of those who report the largest amount of breakeage and the four who report the lowest.

Mr. W. J. Motte of Charleston leads the list with the highest amount. He started in business in September, 1897, and purchased \$320.25 and reported breakeage \$6.55—2 per cent. In April his purchases were \$197.70 and breakeage \$12.97—6 per cent.—which is 3 per cent. greater in April, 1898, than in September, 1897, when he assumed charge of the sub-dispensary.

This is out of all reason and there must be something radically wrong if his management from a business standpoint. I next call your attention to the Mt. Pleasant dispensary, which is near Charleston, and to which the goods are shipped by Mr. Charles and over the same railroad, and in addition to this these goods have to be unloaded upon the steamship wharves and reloaded upon steam boats and unloaded upon the wharves in Mt. Pleasant again, which requires more handling than Mr. Motte's goods does in the city; with this additional handling the Mt. Pleasant dispensary breakeage is not as great as Mr. Motte's. The figures are:

May purchases, 1897, \$338.49; breakeage, \$4.41; 1.3 per cent. April purchases, 1898, \$414.06; breakeage, \$5.25; 1.24 per cent; which is 7 per cent. greater in April, 1898, than in May, 1897, when the present dispenser assumed charge. But his breakeage is increasing instead of decreasing.

Mr. Charles, with experience and proper management.

I believe if the records were searched it will be found that the Chester dispensary would have the largest breakeage accounts of any in the State. I have taken this as I have the others, the first report of the breakeage of the present dispenser's management and the last report, which is April of this

THE BATTLE AT MANILA.

A FULL ACCOUNT OF THE ONCE-DECEASED CONFLICT.

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